

LAND-2021-00016, Tree Regulations Update  
Planning Commission Issues Matrix

Issue/Commissioner	Discussion Notes	Issue Status
1. Hazardous Trees (Commissioners Knopf and Captain)	<p><u>PC Comments</u> How are hazardous trees defined?</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u></p> <p><u>Staff Comments</u> Hazardous trees are defined as, "A tree that is so affected by a significant structural defect or disease, that falling or failure appears imminent, or a tree that impedes safe vision or traffic flow, or that otherwise currently poses a threat to life or property." This definition has been modified to remove dead trees as hazardous trees. There is a new definition for dead trees. Hazardous trees can sometimes be readily identifiable given their lean or obvious visual structural defect. Other times, hazardous trees are not readily apparent, and an arborist report could be required. Such might be the case with trees that have root rot or internal disease.</p>	<p>Opened 9/29/2021 Closed 10/13/2021</p>
2. Landmark Trees (Commissioners Knopf and Captain)	<p><u>PC Comments</u> What is the process for landmark tree removal? Should there be enhanced fines for their removal?</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u></p> <p><u>Staff Comments</u></p>	<p>Opened 9/29/2021 Closed 10/13/2021</p>

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	<p>People wanting to remove landmark trees must apply for an Exception. This process is being changed to a Deviation to be consistent with Zoning Code terminology. The Tree Regulations contain review criteria for granting these requests. There are no associated fees with these requests. [RZC 21.72.100 (p. 14); Note: Need to renumber this section to RZC 21.72.080.]</p> <p>The proposed regulations include increased fines, in both the size of replacement trees and monetarily, for illegal tree removal. [RZC 21.72.110 (p.15)]</p>	
<p>3. Tree Removal Permits (Commissioner Knopf)</p>	<p><u>PC Comments</u> What is the cost to remove an invasive species through a tree removal permit?</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u></p> <p><u>Staff Comments</u> Tree removal permits are required for removal of significant trees. Significant trees are healthy trees (regardless of species) six-inches in diameter-at-breast-height or larger. The City does not have tree removal permit fees. These permits are free.</p>	<p>Opened 9/29/2021 Closed 10/13/2021</p>
<p>4. Replacement Trees (Commissioners Varadharajan and Captain)</p>	<p><u>PC Comments</u> Consider replacement of dying trees. Mature trees die for various reasons - age, climate change, infestation. What happens to the replenishment rate?</p>	<p>Opened 9/29/2021 Closed 10/12/2021</p>

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	<p>Create an appendix that identifies different types of replacement tree species, addressing native trees, drought tolerant trees, disease resistant trees, etc. This could be a companion document along with graphics.</p> <p>How are tree replacement plantings enforced?</p> <p>Are the other alternatives to replacement tree species other than the classic big leaf maples and evergreens? For instance, would fruit trees qualify?</p> <p>Make sure we keep the tree canopy we have is kept. Need to understand the consequences of dying trees. What does that mean for the tree canopy? Consider a strategy specifically for dying landmark trees or those trees in specific geospatial areas, such as a green belt or heat sink. How do we address temporary problems, such as infestation of a specific tree, or response to climate change? (10/13/2021)</p> <p>However, be careful not to overregulate. Impact on an average homeowner is a valid concern. There are also manpower challenges to implement such a requirement. (10/13/2021)(10/27/2021)</p> <p>Ensure the City has a strategy to replenish trees in event of a large scale die off due to drought, climate change, etc. Establish guidance on how to achieve a massive replanting. This could be an element of the Tree Canopy Strategic Plan. (10/27/2021)</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u></p>	

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	<p><u>Staff Comments</u></p> <p>Currently, the proposal does not require replacement of dead trees.</p> <p>Staff agrees that a companion document regarding replacement trees would be beneficial to the public.</p> <p>Tree replacement plantings for tree removal permits are on the honor system. The City does not have the capacity to follow-up on every tree planted. However, replacement trees required as a result of development proposals are enforced through site inspections and bonding as required in RZC 21.76.090.F.</p> <p>Replacement trees are primarily native species. Coniferous trees are replaced with coniferous trees. Deciduous trees are replaced with either coniferous or deciduous trees. If an ornament tree is removed, then it may be replaced with another ornamental tree. [RZC 21.72.040.C.3 (p.6)]</p> <p>The proposed regulations include a 1:1 tree replacement for hazardous trees. This would likely include some dying trees. Requiring replacement of dying trees could put an additional burden onto property owners as well as staff regarding implementation. (10/13/2021)</p> <p>Consequences of dying trees was not an element of the Tree Canopy Strategic Plan. There is a natural successional cycle to trees. At one point, Forterra had</p>	

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	<p>performed a forest health assessment as part of our Green Redmond Partnership.  <a href="https://forterra.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/FINAL_GRP_20_YP_InDesign_FORWEB.pdf">https://forterra.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/FINAL_GRP_20_YP_InDesign_FORWEB.pdf</a>            Undertaking a study to specifically address the impacts of dying trees on the tree canopy would require staff time and is beyond the scope of the Tree Regulations Update. (10/13/2021)</p> <p>Staff discussed the request to create a tree planting strategy in the event of a massive die off and suggested appropriate language be included in the Commission's report to the City Council regarding this topic. (10/27/2021)</p>	
5. Tree Topping (Commissioner Captain)	<p><u>PC Comments</u>            How is tree topping addressed?</p> <p>Concur it's appropriate to define tree topping and consider tree topping the same as removal, thus requiring remediation.</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u></p> <p><u>Staff Comments</u>            The proposal includes a new definition for topping. <i>"Cutting the branches and/or leader of a tree in a manner that destroys the existing symmetrical appearance or natural structure of the tree and involves the removal of main lateral branches and leaving the trunk of the tree or major branches of the tree"</i></p>	Opened 9/29/2021 Closed 10/13/2021

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	<p><i>with a stub appearance. This does not include pruning fruit trees to encourage the production of fruit."</i> In addition, it is proposed that tree topping will be considered tree removal and subject to remediation. [RZC 21.72.120.B]</p>	
<p>6. Growth Data and Canopy Coverage (Commissioner Captain)</p>	<p><u>PC Comments</u> Does the City have tree canopy data for 1998? It would be interesting to know if there has been a loss in tree canopy that covers the population/housing/jobs horizon (1998-2020) that was presented. Additionally, is there information on canopy coverage for the contiguous city (exclusive of the Redmond Watershed)?</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u></p> <p><u>Staff Comments</u> The City does not have tree canopy coverage for 1998; 2009 is the City's first data set. The pixilation of earlier aerial photographs and current tool sophistication won't yield satisfactory reports. The quality is not there to perform the analysis. The City receives new aerial photography every two years and acquires LiDAR every ten years.</p> <p>The most recent tree canopy coverage data is from 2019. Contiguous city tree canopy coverage is roughly 33%. This number jumps to approximately 38% when including the Redmond Watershed.</p>	<p>Opened 9/29/2021 Closed 10/13/2021</p>

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	Although we do not have benchmarking data from 1998, the City does have canopy data that shows a rate loss from 2009-2017 of roughly 135 acres, or approximately 1.3%. (10/13/2021)	
7. Single Family Homeowners and Development Tension (Commissioner Nichols)	<p><u>PC Comments</u> Recognizes tension between not wanting developers to remove trees and single-family homeowners who do not want to be regulated on tree removal.</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u></p> <p><u>Staff Comments</u> Acknowledged.</p>	Opened 9/29/2021 Closed 10/13/2021
8. Fallen Trees Due to Environmental Conditions (Commissioner Nichols)	<p><u>PC Comments</u> Do trees that fall due to saturated ground and windstorms need to be replaced?</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u></p> <p><u>Staff Comments</u> Technically, trees that have fallen due to environmental conditions are no longer considered significant trees by definition and would not be required to be replaced. [RZC 21.78, Definitions]</p>	Opened 9/29/2021 Closed 10/13/2021

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9. Incentives to Save Trees (Commissioner Nichols)	<p><u>PC Comments</u></p> <p>Is there a way to incentivize developers to retain trees? For instance, is there the ability to reduce required parking in exchange for saving more trees? Surface parking lots, in particular, reduce available space to plant trees.</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u></p> <p><u>Staff Comments</u></p> <p>The existing and proposed Tree Regulations include a section on incentives for higher levels of tree protection. It points to the Administrative Design Flexibility and Green Building Incentive Programs found elsewhere in the Zoning Code. A discussion of other incentives is welcomed. [RZC 21.72.030.F (p.5)]</p> <p>The City is currently updating parking policies and regulations as part of Redmond 2050, including exploring areas where parking can be reduced or eliminated. This work is focused on the urban centers and areas close to frequent transit (roughly a ten-minute walk). Staff considered how linking tree retention and parking reductions might be accomplished and concluded that the greatest potential is in non-urban center, non-single-family areas of the city. RZC 21.40.010.D.2 allows the Administrator to approve alternative minimum parking requirements based on a parking study. This could be an avenue for reduced parking for saving more trees than the minimum required. For instance, it could be proposed that if a development saves 40% of the significant trees, they automatically get a certain percentage reduced from the minimum parking requirement. However, staff has not had an opportunity to</p>	<p>Opened 9/29/2021 Closed 10/27/2021</p>



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	analyze ideas like these and so proposes to consider them separately from this package of amendments. Additionally, environmental review and public notices did not include amending the City's parking regulations. (10/13/2021)	
10. Tree Planting Incentive Programs (Commissioners Captain and Varadharajan)	<p><u>PC Comments</u> Does the City have any programs to incentivize tree planting on private property?</p> <p>The City should explore opportunities to get kids involved. Parks could team up with the school district periodically as an avenue to get children to participate for the future benefit of the City. This ethic could be cultivated. Explore a partnership with the King Conservation District. (10/13/2021)</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u></p> <p><u>Staff Comments</u> The Tree Canopy Strategic Plan includes tree planting strategies on private property in the context of a residential tree giveaway, or "treebate" type program. The concept wasn't funded in the 2019-20 budget and staff didn't attempt to request funding last year, given the COVID budget shortfalls. The Plan explored turnkey programs in which an organization, such as Forterra, would run the program which includes purchasing trees, advertising to the citizens, and organizing a pick-up location. The "treebate" or coupon-system would occur in partnership with nurseries and have the added benefit of an educational component when selecting trees.</p>	Opened 9/29/2021 Closed 10/13/2021

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	<p>The City holds events through the Green Redmond Partnership with Forterra. Plantings were on hold due to Covid. However, one is scheduled on October 30<sup>th</sup> to celebrate Green Redmond Day. Additionally, the City contracts with the Washington Conservation Corps for invasive species control and plantings in critical areas.</p> <p>Partnerships with groups like Adopt-A-Stream Foundation, Mountains to Sound, Mid-Sound Fisheries, King Conservation District and others could also be explored.</p>	
<p>11. Industry standard for tree size measurement (Commissioner Nichols)</p>	<p><u>PC Comments</u> Would like confirmation that measuring trees at Diameter at Breast Height (4-1/2 feet) is the industry standard.</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u></p> <p><u>Staff Comments</u> Staff has confirmed with City Parks arborists that the current industry standard for tree size measurement is taken at Diameter at Breast Height, (four and one-half feet above ground surface).</p>	<p>Opened 10/13/2021 Closed 10/27/2021</p>
<p>12. Preserved Trees (Commissioner Varadharajan)</p>	<p><u>PC Comments</u> Where are trees in heat islands, green belts, Native Growth Protection Easements/Areas, etc. located? How are they being cared for? These areas should be kept wild.</p>	<p>Opened 10/13/2021 Closed</p>

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	<p data-bbox="541 399 804 431"><u>Public Comments</u></p> <p data-bbox="541 516 1692 662"><u>Staff Comments</u> The City has an internal GIS layer that contains Native Growth Protection Easements. However, this map may not necessarily identify all critical areas with trees. Some areas are not developable due to environmental restrictions but may also not have protective easements.</p> <p data-bbox="541 711 1692 971">Regarding heat islands, the City is currently preparing a climate vulnerability assessment to help understand the ways climate change will likely impact Redmond - including extreme heat - and also identify the ways we can proactively prepare for those impacts. The preliminary findings will be brought to the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee on October 28th for discussion if you would like to learn more. The final report will be presented to Council during Q1 2022.</p> <p data-bbox="541 1019 1692 1125">King County is working on a heat mapping project. Information can be found at: <a href="https://kingcounty.gov/depts/dnrp/newsroom/newsreleases/2020/July/27-Heat-Mapping-Project.aspx">https://kingcounty.gov/depts/dnrp/newsroom/newsreleases/2020/July/27-Heat-Mapping-Project.aspx</a></p>	10/21/2021

11/10/2021